

The News From Native Plant School

July 2016



Native Plant School is a partnership between Shaw Nature Reserve, The Missouri Department of Conservation, and Wild Ones Natural Landscapers. Classes are held in the Whitmire Wildflower Garden at Shaw Nature Reserve.

Please register at shawnature.org/NPS



Upcoming classes

July 14, 2016

Monarch Gardening

Susie Van de Riet

Monarchs have become the new Bluebird. Students will learn why Monarchs have declined and how we can act to help them by planting more milkweed and other plants that they depend on for nectar.

Please register at

shawnature.org/NPS

Fall classes

Registration starts August 1, 2016

September 8, 2016

Ethnobotany and Native Plant Folklore

October 13, 2016

Fall Flowering Perennials and Grasses

November 10, 2016

Grapevine Wreath Making

"Nature will bear the closest inspection. She invites us to lay our eye level with her smallest leaf, and take an insect view of its plain."

~Henry David Thoreau

A Big Year for Prairie Forbs

By Scott Woodbury



2016 is turning out to be a big year for some summer flowering prairie forbs (perennial flowering plants) like common milkweed, yellow wingstem, butterfly milkweed, rattlesnake master and many others. All are sending up a proliferation of flower stalks unlike any display I've ever seen. I'm not certain why plants flower heavily in any given year like in 2012 when white wild indigo, *Baptisia alba*, had a big year. It is a plant that can go dormant for many years. 2013-14 were drought years and most perennials didn't make much of a show. Then in 2015 they rebounded a bit with better rains. In 2016 spring rains were consistent and many forbs rebounded. Perhaps the rain had something to do with it, perhaps not. Nature is unpredictable.

Photo by Scott Woodbury

Fall Market

Shaw Wildflower Market in the Whitmire Wildflower Garden
Friday, Sept 9th from 4 - 7:30pm.
Shop for locally produced native plants, food and crafts. Also, experts will answer your native gardening questions.

www.shawnature.org/swm

Prairie Day

FOLLOW THE HERD TO PRAIRIE DAY
AT SHAW NATURE RESERVE

Biennial Event
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.,
Saturday, Sept. 17, 2016

Hitch up the wagons and head out to Prairie Day at Shaw Nature Reserve in Gray Summit. This fun-filled family event portrays prairie heritage through activities and demonstrations, and showcases the Reserve's 250-acre re-created tall grass prairie. Hike with a naturalist through the prairie to learn about prairie life, check out the teepee, play pioneer games, listen to a live band, and watch weavers, spinners and other craft demonstrations.

Gardening Tips

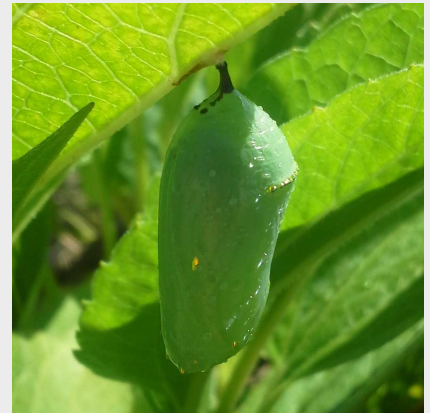
- Expect some leaf fall, a normal reaction to summer drought, especially on red and Ohio buckeye. Continue watering young plantings.
- Trim back any groundcover overhanging curbs or sidewalks.
- Remove deformed plants that have aster yellows virus (like purple coneflower, blazing star, and black-eyed Susan) by digging entire plant and disposing in trash. Composting will spread the virus.

"Earth and sky, woods and fields, lakes and rivers, the mountain and the sea, are excellent schoolmasters, and teach some of us more than we can ever learn from books."

~John Lubbock

Little Known Monarch Facts

By Joyce Oberle



- * Monarch caterpillars eat both day and night with only a little rest in between.
- * Monarch caterpillars eat sideways and can eat an entire milkweed leaf in four minutes.
- * Every day the caterpillar eats its own weight in milkweed.
- * Monarchs taste with their feet.
- * Monarchs can see ultraviolet light that humans cannot see.
- * Monarchs smell with their antennae.
- * The female monarch can lay about 250 eggs/day, and she lays one egg at a time.
- * The witnessed highest number of eggs laid by a female in captivity is 1179.
- * Caterpillars grow about three thousand times their original weight.
- * The ambient temperature needs to be at least sixty degrees before monarchs are able to fly.
- * Monarchs do not fly when it is raining.
- * Monarchs are the only butterfly that migrates both north and south.
- * Because they don't see very well, caterpillars use their antenna to feel their way around.
- * Monarchs only fly during the day and they rest at night.
- * Monarchs fly at speeds ranging between 12-25 miles per hour.
- * A glider pilot recorded the highest a monarch has flown at 11,000 feet. That is over two miles.
- * Milkweed is poisonous, and the poison is transferred from the caterpillar to the butterfly.
- * Monarchs are one of the first insects capable of making transatlantic crossings.
- * Monarchs have six legs like all insects but they only use the middle legs and hind legs. The fore legs are held against their body.

Photos by Scott Woodbury and Besa Schweitzer

Volunteer Event

Volunteer to help with Native Habitat Garden Maintenance at Wild Bird Rehabilitation in Overland.

This landscape has been completely made over to native habitat and earned a BCH GOLD certification last summer. Becky Connor is helping maintain the space, but needs your help!

The 4th Saturday of every month from 10-2 PM will be a birdscaping day, and you're invited. Come on by, if even for a little while. The workday will be cancelled if pouring rain but a light shower won't stop us. Call Becky Connor (314) 968-9725 with questions or to coordinate your visit...or just show up. The site is located at 9624 Midland Blvd. in Overland.

<http://wildbirdrehab.org/>

Hillermann receives award

Washington, Missouri - Hillermann Nursery & Florist Recognized as Pollinator Pantry Provider.

MaryAnn Fink of St. Louis County Park's Pollinator Pantry Garden program did the honors of awarding Hillermann's a certificate of recognition as a "Pollinator Pantry Provider" while she visited the local nursery/garden center to give a presentation on Butterflies.

In the photo from left is MaryAnn Fink - St. Louis County Parks Pollinator Pantry Garden program, Tyler King - Marketing Coordinator for Hillermann Nursery & Florist, Sandi Hillermann McDonald - president of Hillermann Nursery & Florist, and Patty Lynch - Plant Buyer for Hillermann Nursery & Florist.



One Wild Ones Member Inspires her Community



Dawn Weber, a St Louis Wild Ones member and native plant enthusiast has a wonderful yard. She was bitten by the native plant bug a few years ago when she attended the Partners for Native Landscaping Workshop. That was quickly followed by a Bring Conservation Home landscape consultation and then she won the Wild Ones Landscape Challenge.

Marcia Myers recently wrote a two part blog entry about Dawn's yard and you should read it at

<http://stlwildones.org/inspiring-native-plant-yards-dawn-weber-part-1/>
<http://stlwildones.org/inspiring-native-plant-yards-dawn-weber-part-2/>

To get your own Bring Conservation Home landscape consultation visit <http://stlouisaudubon.org/conservation/BCH/index.php>

More info about St Louis Wild Ones at <http://stlwildones.org/>

Listen for Baby Bird Chatter

By Scott Woodbury

If you see three or more birds flying around together, chances are they are the result of a successful nesting. You might notice mom, dad, and baby birds all frantically looking for food. When hungry (all the time), baby birds scream like a baby mandrake in Harry Potter. Right now I am seeing baby nuthatches, wrens, cardinals, juncos, and robins. They are easy to notice once you tune into the chatter. When you see three or more birds that look alike on one branch you know your garden is successful. You can feel good knowing that all the native plants and nutritious caterpillars they attract are working to feed baby birds.



Photos by Scott Woodbury

Book Review

Gardening for Butterflies: How You Can Attract and Protect Beautiful, Beneficial Insects

Reviewed by Carol Boshart

“Written by the Xerces Society which is dedicated to invertebrate protection, this book is designed for both novice and veteran home gardeners, as well as for larger-scale land managers and developers whose goal is to facilitate and enrich diversified ecosystems to attract and protect butterflies and moths as well other insects and interdependent wildlife populations. The authors express significant concern about the precipitous decline in the Lepidoptera order, and seek to “provide a blueprint for...change” in recruiting gardeners for help in reversing this alarming trend.”

Read more at:

stlwildones.org/book-review-gardening-for-butterflies/

Member Event

Missouri Botanical Garden Member Day: Rain Gardening: Letting Mother Nature Water your Garden
July 12, 6 - 7 pm. RSVP required.

www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/things-to-do/events/member-events.aspx

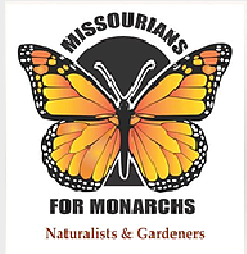
Editors Note:

Please send me your before and after photos of your yard. I am especially interested in pictures of the transformation of honeysuckle infested woodlands to native plant gardens.

An archive of this newsletter is available at: <http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/visit/family-of-attractions/shaw-nature-reserve/gardens-gardening-at-shaw-nature-reserve/native-landscaping-for-the-home-gardener/native-plant-school/the-news-from-native-plant-school.aspx>

Missourians for Monarchs

By Bob Lee



Missourians for Monarchs-Naturalist & Gardeners is a team of volunteers who serve as a resource for anyone wanting to create or enhance a monarch/pollinator garden. Our goal is to provide tools and information that will make

it very easy for every gardener to help the monarchs. We provide presentations on the plight of the monarch, guides to the types of plants monarchs need, garden design assistance, as well as information on how to collect, process and store milkweed seeds. Our newsletter highlights what is happening around the state to help restore the monarchs to a sustainable population level.

Contact us at mo4monarchs@gmail.com or call Bob Lee, 314-496-5332.

Inviting Pollinators to the Garden

By Besa Schweitzer

Are you thinking about trying to improve your garden to invite pollinators? Sometimes all the options can be intimidating. Remember that any improvement, however modest, is better than none at all. Take care of the basic requirements first; flowers to forage from, suitable places to nest and lay eggs, and an environment free of pesticides. Your native plant garden probably already provides habitat for many insects. Before you make any changes look for existing pollinator habitat that is already present and plan to protect it and any pollinators already using your garden. Make positive changes in a way that minimizes disturbance to existing pollinators. Simple steps can be successful and satisfying.



“Four factors—the loss and fragmentation of habitat, the degradation of remaining habitat, pesticide poisoning, and the spread of diseases and parasites—account for most of the declines in populations of bees and other pollinators. These factors have complex political, economic, and social origins that are not easily addressed.

At the local level, however, the solutions to many of these problems are simple and straightforward. Many insects are fairly resilient, and there are actions we can take in our own backyards and neighborhoods, on farms and ranches, and in city parks and wild areas, to help strengthen and support pollinator populations.”

~ Xerces Society,
Attracting Native Pollinators, p. 14

Photo by Besa Schweitzer